



**Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations
Human Rights Council – Universal Periodical Review
Benin, October 25th, 2012**

Madam President,

The Holy See welcomes the Delegation of Benin led by H.E. Marie Elise Gbedo, Minister of Justice, Legislation and Human Rights, Spokesperson of the Government. The National Report highlights the significant work made to promote and protect human rights in the country. My Delegation congratulates Benin for its accomplishments in the areas of education, corruption prevention, death penalty abolition, prevention of violence and poverty reduction, among others.

On the other hand, Benin still faces significant challenges. Some forms of violence persist in the education, police and prison systems, and even in the family. Access to education and health should be improved. We recall the appeal of His Holiness, Benedict XVI, who stated in his visit to Benin, some months ago, that we should be aware of the problems that exist but also feel encouraged and full of hope and he blessed the efforts of "all persons who operate for reconciliation, justice and peace".

My Delegation wishes to present the following recommendations for consideration by Benin:

- To take measures to guarantee full protection of children's human rights by eliminating and reducing child trafficking, violence against children, their sexual abuse and economic exploitation, their ritual killing, infanticide and child labour and by improving the birth registration of all children, especially in rural areas.
- To continue accelerating the improvement of the judicial, police and prison systems in line with international human rights standards.
- To continue cooperation with the international community for better access to food, water and sanitation for the Population of Benin given the country's limited resources.

Thank you, Madam President.